

Waukegan News Sun, April 18, 2005

WAUKEGAN — Saturday was National Youth Service Day and local high school and college students helped build the Youth United House for Habitat for Humanity in Waukegan.

The event was organized by the Student Leadership Advisory Board of U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk, R-Highland Park. The Habitat home under construction is in the Carter Woods subdivision at Dugdale and 14th streets.

Across the country, young people have been raising money and building Habitat homes in more than 60 locations. Habitat's Youth United program provides an opportunity for young people to help make homeownership a reality for a deserving family in need. Younger children not old enough to build homes raise money through various activities, such as building mailboxes and birdhouses, while older participants in the program landscape yards and raise walls on houses.

Youth United celebrations take place in 23 states. Since 2002, an estimated 6,000 youths have helped build 26 Habitat for Humanity homes through the annual program.

"We've seen a tremendous number of young volunteers coming forward to help low-income families in Waukegan," said Julie Donovan, executive director of Habitat for Humanity Lake County. "Youth United has given Habitat's young volunteers a chance to actively participate in its mission regardless of age."

Habitat for Humanity Lake County is a Christian housing ministry which welcomes all people dedicated to building decent, affordable housing for families in need, while empowering families to help themselves, officials said. Habitat for Humanity builds partnerships with diverse members of the community which break down the walls that divide and builds a sense of community among all people, Donovan said.